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SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI PLANNING FOR AMISOM CONTINGENT

¶1. SUMMARY. From January 11-15, Djibouti National Armed Forces (FAD) senior staff planners joined U.S. Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) planners to conduct a Peace Support Operations (PSO) Training Strategy Conference. The purpose of the conference was to develop Djibouti's strategy to participate in multinational peacekeeping operations in Africa and commence planning for Djibouti's deployment of a peacekeeping contingent to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Djiboutian senior planners stated Djibouti's intent to deploy a contingent of approximately 465 peacekeepers to AMISOM on or about January 2011. The deployment will be preceded by 10 weeks of ACOTA PSO training. The planners also stated Djibouti's objective to achieve full self-sufficiency in PSO training by 2014. END SUMMARY.

¶2. Djibouti ACOTA Training Strategy Conference. The FAD and ACOTA conducted a PSO Training Strategy Conference, from January 11-15. Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Yousseuf and Ambassador opened the conference. FM Yousseuf expressed Djibouti's commitment to contribute to regional peace and security, specifically including the deployment of peacekeepers. He emphasized the importance of Africans leading peacekeeping in Africa and recognized and thanked the U.S. for its capacity-building efforts. He charged the Djiboutian planning team to develop a realistic, detailed plan for deploying a Djiboutian contingent to AMISOM. The Djiboutian planning team consisted of both military and civilian senior leaders, including the FAD Operations Director, FAD Deputy Logistics Director, FAD Administration and Finance Director, senior Navy, National Police, and Gendarmerie officers, and senior representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Security Office, and Interior Ministry. The U.S. team included the DATT, representatives from AFRICOM and CJTF-HOA, and the ACOTA facilitation team.

¶3. Djibouti's peacekeeping strategy. The Djiboutian planning team stated Djibouti's intent to deploy a contingent of approximately 465 peacekeepers to AMISOM on or about January 2011. The deployment will be preceded by 10 weeks of ACOTA PSO training at a location still to be determined by the Djiboutians. Subsequently, rotational Djiboutian AMISOM contingents will receive ACOTA training, with Djiboutian PSO training cadre increasing capacity and training leadership over time. Djibouti's objective is to achieve full self-sufficiency in PSO training by 2014. Djibouti's stated intent is to deploy battalion-size AMISOM contingents in 6-month rotations. (COMMENT: Djibouti may be open to increasing the length of the standard deployment. END COMMENT.)

¶4. Djibouti's prospective AMISOM contingent. During the Training Strategy Conference, the Djiboutian planning team developed a table of organization for the AMISOM contingent, to include a battalion headquarters with standard battalion staff sections, two infantry

companies, a support company including a Gendarmerie section, a 6-vehicle APC platoon, a small motor transport section, a medical section, a full complement of combat service support sections to support the contingent, and a headquarters company. The battalion will include liaison officers to the Ugandan and Burundian AMISOM contingents. The battalion will also include a Somali-speaking interpreter section to support the Ugandan AMISOM contingent. The Djiboutian planning team seemed open to consider a similar interpreter section to support the Burundian AMISOM contingent. The planning team requested U.S. assistance to allow the interpreter teams to train alongside Uganda AMISOM Battalion Group 5 during February-April 2010 at Singo, Uganda, and may be open to a similar concept to train alongside Burundi's AMISOM Battalion 8 during February-April 2010 near Bujumbura, Burundi. Djibouti's planning team is now building a detailed itemized list of necessary equipment for the AMISOM contingent, to be complete no later than January 22.

¶15. Djibouti's PSO Training Concept. The Djiboutian planning team developed a 10-week pre-deployment training concept, to include 5 weeks of PSO command and staff training and 5 weeks of PSO soldier skills training, all focused specifically on AMISOM preparation. ACOTA and FAD commenced collaboration on the details of the Program of Instruction to ensure that the training is tailored to meet the contingent's training requirements. The training will occur as near to the deployment date as possible; ACOTA is prepared to commence training as early as February 2010. The FAD suggested several potential training sites to include Hol Hol and Ali Ouni (both sites were surveyed by the ACOTA team), but is committed to training the initial contingent at a site that is readily available and will not

delay training and deployment.

¶16. PSO Training Self Sustainment. A major emphasis for the ACOTA program in Djibouti, and a major objective of the FAD, is Djibouti's achievement of long-term self-sufficiency in PSO training. The FAD proposed that this will be achieved by 2014 through progressively increasing the capacities of Djibouti's PSO instructor cadre--to include specially trained Gendarmerie trainer(s). One of Djibouti's key strengths is that it has a standing cadre of permanent military instructors now located in southern Djibouti at Hol Hol, and is adept at providing already self-sufficient mobile training teams and camps for the training of the FAD.

¶17. Training Strategy Conference Report. The FAD (with ACOTA support) is now preparing a PSO Strategic Training Action Plan, scheduled to be complete on January 22. This will allow for more detailed follow-up on the next steps for an AMISOM deployment. The FAD and ACOTA will conduct a PSO Training Strategy Update Conference during early 2011.

¶18. This message was drafted by the ACOTA planning team prior to departure from Djibouti and approved by the Ambassador.

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